



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/663,514

09/16/2003

Nolan L. Smith

55508-277457

5043

25764

7590

06/09/2006

FAEGRE & BENSON LLP
PATENT DOCKETING
2200 WELLS FARGO CENTER
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

EXAMINER

WILLSE, DAVID H

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3738

DATE MAILED: 06/09/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/663,514

Applicant(s)

SMITH ET AL.

Examiner

Dave Willse

Art Unit

3738

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 March 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12, 13, 16, 20-24 and 30-33 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11, 14, 15, 17-19, 25-29 and 34-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on February 6, 2004, is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3 pages total.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

In the Information Disclosure Statement of October 23, 2003, the French patent document was not considered because a concise explanation of the relevance (37 C.F.R. § 1.98(a)(3)) was not presented.

Claims 12, 13, 16, 20-24, and 30-33 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on March 17, 2006.

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: In the formal version of Figure 12B received on February 6, 2004, the apparently disconnected components near the ball joint do not appear to be consistent with the informal version as filed on September 16, 2003, and are not explained in the specification. On page 2, line 18, "portion" is misspelled. On page 6, line 7, "11A" should apparently read --12A--; also, the drawing does not appear to be "a cross-sectional view". On page 14, line 17, "planar" is misspelled. In claim 1, line 4, "An" should not be capitalized. Appropriate correction is required.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the perforation extending *longitudinally* through the first, anterior buffer (claim 10), the perforation extending laterally through the second, posterior buffer (claim 11, which is said to be readable on the elected species), and the heel buffer not extending *anteriorly* to the end of the heel member (claim 28) must be shown or the features canceled from the claims. **No new matter should be entered.**

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet,

even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either “Replacement Sheet” or “New Sheet” pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 34 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In claim 34, line 2, “the first and second buffers” lacks a proper antecedent basis.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are

Art Unit: 3738

such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17-19, 25-29, and 35-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Kleylein, DE 1 211 354: drawings. Figure 6 illustrates a lower member **2**, an upper member **1**, a ball joint **22** and **23**, a post **21**, a first resilient buffer or bumper **24** or **9** and **10**, and a second resilient buffer or bumper **9** and **10** or **19**. Regarding claim 14, the plug can be viewed as one of elements **4**, **6**, or **27**, for example. Regarding claim 26 and others, Figure 6 shows a heel buffer **28** positioned between the lower member **2** and a heel member **3**.

Claim 34 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kleylein, DE 1 211 354: drawings. Altering the outer surfaces of the buffers **9** or **19** or **24** so as to form an integral coating would have been obvious to the ordinary practitioner in order to improve wear resistance and the like.

Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kleylein, DE 1 211 354: drawings, in view of Roeser, DE 924 230: drawings. To modify element **9** of Kleylein so as to have a lateral perforation and an anterior slit in a manner similar to features **6** and **7** of Roeser would have been obvious in order to facilitate pivotal movement, with further motivation having been provided by both patent documents being directed to dampened ankle joint dynamics.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

US 2,493,884:	Figures 3 and 4; column 2, lines 21-31.
GB 2 008 410 A:	drawings.

Art Unit: 3738

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dave Willse whose telephone number is 571-272-4762. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott, can be reached on 571-272-4754. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.



Dave Willse
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3738